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Washington State
SERVICE CORPS



Ready★corps

Washington State
SERVICE CORPS

The WSC was created by the Washington State Legislature in 1983 to provide residents of the state of Washington with opportunities to serve their communities. The WSC assists private non-profit organizations and units of local government in addressing community needs and providing meaningful service experiences.

Since 1992, the WSC has been a key player in the national service movement that engages Americans of all ages and backgrounds in service that lights the darkness in communities across the nation. AmeriCorps members perform service that has direct and demonstrable impact in the areas of education, the environment, human services, homeland security and public safety.



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Esprit de Corps

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Computer Pals cross many bridges together

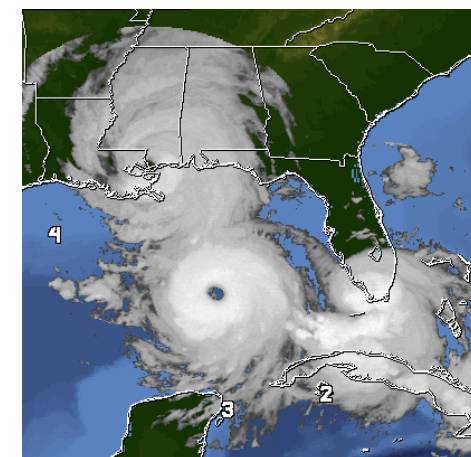
"Just take your time, you're doing great!" Twelve-year-old Sterling Quinn is one of many students in the greater Seattle area who has volunteered his knowledge, time, and energy to instruct an elder from his community in the basics of computer and Internet use. Through a program called "Computer Pals", designed by Intergenerational Innovations and implemented by AmeriCorps members, youth and elders are united in the common pursuit of remaining connected to each other and their community in today's fast paced world. Bridging both the digital divide and the generation gap, "Computer Pals" provides elders with personal satisfaction and



Sterling Quinn shares his computer knowledge, skills, and enthusiasm with an elder.

confidence, the opportunity to interact with youth, and increased feelings of connection, while simultaneously enabling youth to give back to their community, learn about the aging process, and establish relationships with positive role

AmeriCorps responds to Hurricane Season



WASHINGTON, D.C. – "The response to these devastating storms will be the largest volunteer mobilization in our nation's history, and national service will play a critical role in leading and coordinating that mobilization," said David Eisner, CEO of the Corporation for National and Community Service. "Drawing on our experience last year in Florida, when our state commissions took the lead in organizing the volunteer response to the series of hurricanes that hit that state, we are actively mobilizing our volunteers to meet immense short- and long-term needs in housing, victim assistance, health care, and the environment."

For a description of how the WSC contributed to hurricane relief, turn to pages 4 & 5.

Déjà vu? Its New Year's Eve all over again

A note from



Nancy Pringle,
WSC Director

The beginning of the service year is like encountering January 1st all over again. It is a fresh start, where we have closed the door on a year behind us and are beginning new possibilities.

Like New Year's Eve it is a time to take inventory. Not an inventory that looks regretfully at what we have put on the shelves; but an inventory that counts the

things we are looking forward to adding. A year in AmeriCorps is a chance to work on your personal inventory. It is a time to take stock of what we want to add to the shelves of our lives, to decide what supplies are low or what is missing and to decide how to build up ourselves for the very long life we have ahead.

Also like New Year's Eve, the new service year is a good time to make some resolutions. You have already made and taken the steps toward accomplishing a very important resolution. You have resolved to serve the community. You have probably made a few other resolutions as well. My experience tells me that many of your resolutions are also aimed outward, to other people specifically

and to the community in general.

Here are the top ten most common resolutions which Americans usually make on New Year's Eve:

- 1) Lose weight.
- 2) Stop smoking.
- 3) Stick to a budget.
- 4) Save more money.
- 5) Find a better job.
- 6) Become more organized.
- 7) Exercise more.
- 8) Be more patient at work/with others.
- 9) Eat better.
- 10) Become a better person.

These are all pretty optimistic resolutions. Carrying through on these resolutions will make for better life. But each of these resolutions are inward oriented, affecting mostly the person who

makes them. You would probably agree that most people should be a little or a lot, more oriented towards others.

While you are carrying through on your resolutions to make your community, nation and world a better place; take just a little time to think about yourself. It is as dangerous to be solely oriented outward as it is to be solely oriented inward. Seek a balance. Take a look at the most common resolutions. Just because they are common doesn't mean they do not have value.

Resolve to do something for yourself. Resolve to add a few things to your personal inventory.

I know I have.

What are yours?



Pre-SERVES Service unites teams

On October 17, the day before the SERVES institute began in Yakima, a combined force of over 40 AmeriCorps and VISTA members from the Vancou-

ver based ESD 112 WRC team and the Yakima based OIC WRC team completed joint service projects. Members serving at the Yakima Arboretum and the adjacent Humane Society performed trail work and exercised dogs from the Humane

Society. Members volunteering at Northwest Harvest sorted and stacked food to be distributed at local food banks. At both service projects members from each program worked, learned and laughed alongside each other; not a bad way to start a conference.

A Community's Dream

I have a Dream

*I have a Dream of a World with no money
a world where corporate greed doesn't dictate
right from wrong
of a world where each person shall speak their truth
I have a Dream that there is no favorite color, shape or style
that our world leaders will realize that all people are worth
caring about and for
that all people would know that are supremely loved
that we all can sing and dance as pure energy
that we can use our energy, strength, wisdom, Intelligence and love to build
a world with
peace, freedom and equality
I have a Dream of a world that has NO Hunger
of a world where everyone prospers
to share simple joy of who we are....
accepting our spirits as us
that we will use our Words, not our guns
that we will be flexible, knowledgeable
strong to change and to love
That is my Dream.*



January 16, 2006

This poem was woven together by Kylie Ransom, AmeriCorps USA, Lacey Elementary from an activity done during MLK Jr. Day 2005. Segments of the poem were contributed by various people within the community of Olympia.

Campus Compact Makes A Difference in Skagit County

The Washington Reading Corps Campus Compact team held a food drive for Make a Difference Day on October 29 in Mount Vernon. Working with the Skagit Community Action Program (Skagit CAP), the team delivered food to 53 families in the Skagit County area.

Team members designed a flyer for distribution and went to dozens of houses in the area to post the flyers and ask for donations. On the morning of the 29th, the WRC team went to collect donated food at those homes and also collected food at a local Safeway. Community Resource Coordinator Shawn Collins at Skagit CAP worked hard to set up logistics and also secured extra donations, such as

frozen salmon patties, eggs, cheese, butter and fresh fruit and



WRC members from Campus Compact sort donations for Skagit families.

vegetables from the Grocery Outlet and other generous local businesses.

After collecting the food, the team reassembled at Christ the King church in Mount Vernon and enjoyed food donated by Little Caesars pizza, the Food Co-op in Bellingham and the Fairhaven Red Apple Market. The team then assembled 53 boxes for donation, which were overflowing with canned goods, fresh items and paper products.

Finally, small groups distributed the boxes to Skagit CAP clients, homebound elderly and disabled community members, who otherwise would not have received food that week.

Building for the future is a team effort

You signed up for AmeriCorps and National Service because you wanted to tutor children, save the environment, be ready for the next big disaster, help elders, and/or serve the public. Then what's all this talk about case statements, stakeholders, an elevator speech and a comprehensive plan? Well, one of the many things your supervisor does when you're busy getting things done, is to work on the "big-picture," long-range planning, or as it is called in AmeriCorps: Sustainability.

Long-term sustainability of programs is an emphasis of the

Corporation for National and Community Service



(CNCS) and should be an important part of each team's mission. The Washington Service Corps has developed a sustainability initiative built around The Four Pillars of Sustainability:

- People (internal support),

- Partnerships and collaborations (external support),
- Communication and Marketing, and
- Resource Development.

The Washington Service Corps is placing an increasing emphasis on project sustainability over the next four years. This is being done for a number of reasons, but most importantly, according to WSC Deputy Director Deb Schuffenhauer, "We want to provide the teams with additional tools, training, and technical support to help strengthen the projects and the services provided."

Team supervisors are receiving special training in the Four Pillars, and have new tools to document

accomplishments. Documenting the progress teams make towards sustainability is critical. It is an expectation for all twenty team-based partners that they take steps towards sustainability and that they have a clear plan in place with ways to measure progress towards sustainability.



National research results

Participation in AmeriCorps resulted in statistically significant positive impacts on members, including their:

- Connection to community
- Knowledge about problems facing their community
- Participation in community-based activities
- Neighborhood obligations such as reporting crime and keeping neighborhoods clean
- Grassroots efficacy, such as starting new programs to meet community needs

Ferry County & Tonasket team up to make a difference

Although separated by 40 miles and the highest mountain pass in the state, the Tonasket Schools and Ferry County AmeriCorps Teams find much in common. High in the north central tier of Washington, both of them are over 120 miles from the other nearest AmeriCorps teams. Being relative neighbors, they get together, pooling their numbers, to make a difference in each of their communities.

In September, at the request of Ferry County Commissioners, the AmeriCorps teams began the new service year with a wetland service project. Joining the two AmeriCorps teams were 29 volunteers from the Job Corps center in Curlew

(Job Corps is a US Dept. of Labor residential job training program, not related to AmeriCorps.) Together the teams planted 108 trees.

Members and volunteers chatted, getting to know each other as they worked. After completion, all took time to reflect on the accomplishments. The youth from Job Corps were amazed at how fast the project went and how well all the groups worked together.

For the annual "Make a Difference Day" in October, the Tonasket and Ferry County AmeriCorps members held a "Carnival for a Cause" at the Tonasket Elementary School. According to AmeriCorps

The children from the community had a great time at the carnival planned by the AmeriCorps members. The "cost" for families to get into the carnival was a can

ner as they received a ticket or prize for each activity or game they played," said Mrs. Conkle a fifth grade teacher at Tonasket Elementary School.



AmeriCorps members hosted "Carnival for a Cause" at Tonasket Elementary.

At the same time, there were other volunteers helping out in the community garden, cleaning the school campus and painting around the elementary school. Although the school district has an amazing crew to clean up the district, there are still areas that continuously

or bag of animal food or a dollar donation. Many families from the community brought more than their share. There were games such as catch a fish, feed the monkey, can knockdown and many more. Tickets were issued to the children at each game played. They in turn "cashed" in their tickets for prizes. The prize table was a big hit!

"The carnival on Saturday was totally child oriented. There were very age-appropriate activities and the kids loved the games and prizes they were winning. Each game helped little kids with their hand — eye coordination and all kids felt like a win-

need servicing. The entrances of the buildings and surrounding the school got an extra cleaning. The hopscotch squares were looking dim, so AmeriCorps and volunteers brightened them by repainting the squares.

"The AmeriCorps members from Ferry County are outstanding. They are a close team who work well not only with each other, but with other teams as well. Tonasket AmeriCorps members are fortunate to have a great team with whom to collaborate," stated Nina Davis, Tonasket AmeriCorps Supervisor.



AmeriCorps service works the back muscles, as well as the muscles of the mind.

Washington Service Corps' Ready★Corps Responds to Hurricanes Katrina, Rita & Wilma

Two Members Deploy to Gulf Coast

Two AmeriCorps members from the Washington Service Corps Ready★Corps disaster preparedness program spent several weeks in the Gulf Coast region to assist in hurricane relief and recovery efforts.

Tyler Ray, an AmeriCorps member serving at Homeland Security Region 3 in Thurston County, responded to needs in Louisiana following Hurricane Rita. On November 19, Stephanie Scott, who serves at the Red Cross

in Bellingham, was deployed to Florida to assist in Hurricane Wilma relief efforts.

Here is part of Tyler's reflection on his service:

"Hurricane Rita made landfall on September 24, 2005 between Johnson's Bayou, Louisiana and Sabine Pass, Texas. On October 28th I flew into Baton Rouge to help with the recovery efforts of the American Red Cross. Arriving in Baton Rouge, I was surprised to find that the electricity was on and that my cell phone worked—the city did not appear to have sustained any damage from the storm.

However, as I drove west towards my destination of Lake Charles, Louisiana, the landscape began to change. I began to notice fallen, contorted trees, flipped cars, crumbling roads, and the acrid smell of burning debris. Rita had been here. A sea of blue roofs is revealed as I enter the city limits: a patchwork of tarps, courtesy of FEMA, shielding homes until insurance money arrives, if it arrives at all.

For 21 days this city

was my home. I worked 15-hour days doing damage assessment, food preparation, meal delivery, client services, and food operations supervision in areas south of Lake Charles in

which entire communities no longer exist. The most rewarding part of the job was getting out in the field and talking with people along the Gulf Coast, people who had lost everything, and, yet, somehow managed to muster

the courage and stoicism to gather the few things that the storm had not destroyed and begin to rebuild their lives. It was humbling. The hardships of the assignment—living in a shelter with 100 other people, being away from family and friends, seeing suffering and destruction on a level tantamount to war—seem inconsequential, even trivial set against the backdrop of the lives of these victims.

I returned home in the days before Thanksgiving. This year especially, I know I have much to be thankful for."



WSC Ready★Corps member Tyler Ray with Fred Dick of New Jersey, another Hurricane Rita relief volunteer in Lake Charles, LA.

Members organize volunteers from Washington State

The 2005-2006 class of Ready★Corps members completed Pre-Service Orientation on the 26th of August, reported to work on the 29th of August, and were immediately thrown into an inferno with the events of Hurricane Season.

Amy Krog is serving at the Benton-Franklin Chapter of the American Red Cross in Kennewick. Amy reports on her first few days:

"In retrospect, if I could have chosen any time to begin work with the Red Cross as a Volunteer Coordinator through the AmeriCorps VISTA program, I would have chosen the day I did begin, the day Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast. All of the phone lines were ringing throughout the day. We were inundated with calls from community members wanting to volunteer in some way in response to the hurricane; donations, questions about the Red Cross response and people searching for information about family and friends."

"The local news media were here, too, asking questions and interviewing staff as well as contributors and volunteers. I met with the Disaster Services Coordinator to set up Orientation, Introduction to Disaster and Mass Care Overview classes. I quickly became familiar with the steps a volunteer has to go through to be a Disaster Response

Volunteer.

I was mailing out applications with my left hand and answering calls from volunteers with my right. Everyone had a story or a reason or needed to know if they had to actually deploy to the hurricane impact area to be of any help."

Roberta Martin is serving at the Southwest Washington Chapter of the American Red Cross in Longview. Roberta has been answering questions over the phone, in person and through e-mail. Roberta accepts volunteer applications from many people and schedules disaster response classes for them. She also sets appointments for the Emergency Services Senior Director, Kari Myklebust. Kari gave Roberta a big compliment and said that Roberta is the foundation that lets her job flow the best it can. Roberta has taken the Introduction to Disasters class offered by the Red Cross, but has been so busy accepting applications from people who want to help that she has had to put her own training on hold for the time being.

Crystal Mills is serving at the Yakima Chapter of

the American Red

Cross. She has also been keeping very busy helping volunteers get ready to help: Crystal likes working at the Red Cross in this busy time, even though she said she thought to herself, "What an awful time to start at the Red Cross!" When volunteers come in to help she answers their questions, and if they are interested in being deployed, she helps them fill out the necessary paperwork and gets them signed up for the required trainings. She has also been working on recruiting and training new volunteers to help out in the office. Crystal has also had the opportunity to give interviews to the media, including radio and TV stations.

Other Ready★Corps members are also contributing to the hurricane relief, including:

Rachel Tanner is serving at the Olympic Peninsula Chapter of the American Red Cross. **Darla Ingle** is serving at the North Cascades Chapter of the American Red Cross. **Leah Munion** is serving in the Olympia Office of the Mount Rainier Chapter of the American Red Cross. **Kristen Libra** is serving at the Tacoma Office of the Mount Rainier Chapter of the American Red Cross. **Christine Callo** is serving at the King County Office of Emergency Management and had the opportunity to help out in the state Emergency Operations Center (EOC).